

Message Text

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S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 HELSINKI 1872

EXDIS

US ASAT DELEGATION 0008

MIL ADDRESSEES HANDLE AS SPECAT

NASA FOR KRUEGER

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3
TAGS: PARM
SUBJECT: ASAT TALKS: THIRD PLENARY, JUNE 13, 1978

SUMMARY. AT THIRD PLENARY SESSION KHLESTOV'S OPENING
STATEMENT REITERATED SOVIET UNDERSTANDING OF, AND INTEREST
IN, POSSIBLE AGREEMENT ON HOSTILE ACTS AGAINST SPACE
OBJECTS. WHILE NOTING COINCIDENCE OF US AND SOVIET VIEWS
ON MANY ASPECTS OF POSSIBLE HOSTILE ACTS AGREEMENTS,
KHLESTOV RESTATED SOVIET RESERVATIONS ABOUT SHUTTLE,
SPACE OBJECTS COMMITTING UNLAWFUL ACTS, AND THIRD COUN-
TRIES. KHLESTOV PUSHED FOR EARLY
SEPARATE CONCLUSION OF HOSTILE ACTS AGREEMENT. HE
SUGGESTED THAT, WHILE IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO DRAFT SUCH AN
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AGREEMENT AT THIS SESSION, IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO DO SO
AT AN EARLY DATE. HE ASKED WHETHER THE US WOULD BE WIL-
LING TO ADOPT A STEP-BY-STEP APPROACH BEGINNING WITH
THE SIGNING AND ENTRY INTO FORCE OF AN INITIAL SEPARATE
AGREEMENT NOT TO CONDUCT HOSTILE ACTS AGAINST SPACE
OBJECTS, WITH WORK ON OTHER ELEMENTS OF US APPROACH
(TESTING, AND DEVELOPMENT AND DEPLOYMENT) TO CONTINUE

THEREAFTER. THIS AGREEMENT WOULD NOT BE CONDITIONAL ON OTHER ASPECTS OF US POSITION CONCERNING THE LIMITATION OF ASAT DEVELOPMENT AND ELIMINATION OF EXISTING ASAT SYSTEMS, OR ON THE DEGREE OF PROGRESS TOWARD A COMPREHENSIVE AGREEMENT. SOVIETS AGAIN SAID THEY DID NOT CONNECT QUESTION OF SPACE OBJECTS USED FOR UNLAWFUL ACTS WITH DEVELOPMENT OF ASAT SYSTEMS. THEY AGREED THAT, EVEN IF WE CONCLUDE AN AGREEMENT, THERE WOULD STILL BE SECONDARY MEANS TO COUNTER SPACE OBJECTS WHOSE ACTIONS ARE UNLAWFUL. SOVIETS FAILED TO CLARIFY THEIR SPECIFIC CONCERNS ABOUT AN OUTER SPACE OBJECT INTRUDING INTO ANOTHER NATION'S AIR SPACE.

BUCHHEIM'S PREPARED STATEMENT REITERATED US POSITION ON GOAL OF COMPREHENSIVE AGREEMENT, AND DEVELOPED ARGUMENT THAT STATES SHOULD USE PEACEFUL MEANS TO DEAL WITH SATELLITES ENGAGED IN ACTS WHICH MIGHT BE CONSIDERED UNLAWFUL. BUCHHEIM RAISED SOVIET ASAT TESTING, AND ASKED SOVIET VIEWS ON A SUSPENSION OF ASAT TESTING AS AN INITIAL STEP TOWARD A TESTING BAN. BUCHHEIM SAID VERIFICATION BY NTM WOULD BE SUFFICIENT FOR A TEST SUSPENSION, THOUGH A COMPREHENSIVE AGREEMENT MIGHT REQUIRE COOPERATIVE MEASURES. BUCHHEIM LATER SAID THAT THE US IS IN FAVOR OF AN EARLY UNDERSTANDING ON HOSTILE ACTS, BUT WE WOULD NOT LIKE TO DISCUSS THIS TO THE EXCLUSION OF THE BROADER PROBLEM. HOSTILE ACTS IS ONE ELEMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE AGREEMENT, WHICH INCLUDES A PROHIBITION

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OF ASAT DEVELOPMENT AND DEPLOYMENT. WE CAN WORK ON A HOSTILE ACTS AGREEMENT WITH THE OBJECT OF BRINGING IT TO A QUICK CONCLUSION WITHOUT PREVENTING PROGRESS TOWARD OTHER GOALS. COMPREHENSIVE AGREEMENT SHOULD INCLUDE VERIFICATION BY NTM AND NON-INTERFERENCE WITH NTM, BUT MAY ALSO REQUIRE COOPERATIVE MEASURES. EVEN WITH COMPREHENSIVE AGREEMENT, BOTH SIDES WOULD HAVE RESIDUAL ASAT POTENTIAL INCLUDING ABM SYSTEM DEPLOYED BY USSR. END SUMMARY.

1. AT THIRD SESSION OF ASAT TALKS, HELD IN US EMBASSY ON JUNE 13, KHLESTOV NOTED COINCIDENCE OF VIEWS ON PROHIBITION OF HOSTILE ACTS AGAINST SPACE OBJECTS, AND SAID SOVIET SIDE ALSO BELIEVES SUCH A PROHIBITION WOULD BE USEFUL. SOVIET UNDERSTANDING IS THAT PROHIBITION INCLUDES DELIBERATE DESTRUCTION, DISPLACEMENT, MAKING ONBOARD EQUIPMENT UNOPERATIONAL, AND OTHER INTERFERENCE WITH NORMAL FUNCTIONING OF SPACE OBJECT. KHLESTOV REITERATED SOVIET UNDERSTANDING THAT OBLIGATION WOULD INCLUDE BOTH SPACE AND EARTH-BASED MEANS; THE SOVIETS THINK THIS IS THE CORRECT APPROACH. KHLESTOV AGAIN SAID THE OBLIGATION SHOULD NOT APPLY TO SPACE OBJECTS DESIGNED FOR THE CONDUCT OF UNLAWFUL ACTIVITIES.

KHLESTOV SAID US AND SOVIET POSITIONS ON VERIFICATION GENERALLY COINCIDE; IN ADDITION TO USING NTM, THE TWO SIDES SHOULD UNDERTAKE NOT TO INTERFERE WITH NTM. KHESTOV SAID WE SHOULD TRY TO DEFINE WHICH ACTIONS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED HOSTILE.

2. BUCHHEIM MADE PREPARED STATEMENT (SEPTTEL). AFTER REVIEWING MAIN POINTS O BUCHHEIM STATEMENT, KHLESTOV SIGLED OUT ELABORATION OF OBLIGATION NOT TO COMMIT HOSTILE ACTS AGAINST SPACE OBJECTS. HE SAID WITHOUT FURTHER EXPLANATION THAT USSR HAD DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEW ON INTERNATIONAL LEGAL ARGUMENTS FOR USING PEACEFUL MEANS TO DEAL WITH
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SATELLITES ENGAGED IN UNLAWFUL ACTS. KHLESTOV RE-ITERATED THAT PROHIBITION OF DEVELOPMENT AND DEPLOYMENT IS A NEW FORMULATION TO THE USSR. THIS WILL REQUIRE TIME AND STUDY. IN THE MEANTIME, IT IS POSSIBLE FOR THE TWO SIDES TO CONCENTRATE ON THE PROHIBITION OF ACTIONS DIRECTED AGAINST SPACE OBJECTS BY ANY MEANS. THE PROBLEM WILL BE SOLVED MORE EASILY IF WE CONSIDER IT STEP BY STEP FROM THE EASY PARTS TO THE MORE DIFFICULT PARTS. IF WE REACH AGREEMENT PROHIBITING HOSTILE ACTS AGAINST SPACE OBJECTS, IT WILL GIVE US A FAVORABLE POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER STEPS. EVEN IF AN OBLIGATION WERE ELABORATED PROHIBITING SPECIALIZED (ASAT) MEANS, OTHER MEANS WOULD REMAIN EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE NOT INTENDED FOR SUCH ACTS. KHLESTOV INDICATED AGAIN THE SOVIET CONCERN THAT THE US SPACE SHUTTLE HAS ASAT POTENTIAL, AND THE NEED FOR IT TO BE INCLUDED IN ANY SORT OF AGREEMENT ON THE PROHIBITION OF HOSTILE ACTS AGAINST SPACE OBJECTS. KHLESTOV SAID SOVIETS SHARE VIEW THAT BOTH SIDES ARE INTERESTED IN PROTECTING THEIR SPACE OBJECTS. THE ELABORATION OF THIS AGREEMENT WILL MEET OUR INTERESTS, CONTRIBUTE TO FRIENDLY RELATIONS, CONSOLIDATE TRUST AND DETENTE, REDUCE THE THREAT OF WAR, AND AID COOPERATION IN CONQUERING OUTER SPACE AND MAKING PEACEFUL USE OF IT. IT ALSO WILL BE A GOOD EXAMPLE TO OTHERS ENGAGED IN OUTER SPACE ACTIVITIES. IF WE ARE TO ELABORATE AN AGREEMENT NOT TO DEVELOP OR DEPLOY, THE PROBLEM OF THIRD COUNTRIES MUST BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION; THE OBLIGATION NOT TO ENGAGE IN HOSTILE ACTS WOULD HELP.

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EXDIS

US ASAT DELEGATION 0008

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3. KHLESTOV THEN ASKED IF THE US WOULD BE READY TO AGREE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN AGREEMENT ON AN OBLIGATION NOT TO CONDUCT HOSTILE ACTS, TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THAT THIS IS A FIRST STEP. BUCHHEIM REMINDED HIM THAT THE US GOAL IS A COMPREHENSIVE AGREEMENT, BUT ADDED THAT WE ARE VERY MUCH INTERESTED IN EARLY STEPS OF A PRACTICAL NATURE TO MOVE TOWARD THAT GOAL. THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN OBLIGATION NOT TO COMMIT CERTAIN KINDS OF ACTS AGAINST THE SATELLITES OF THE OTHER PARTY IS AN ESSENTIAL ELEMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE AGREEMENT; THIS SEEMS TO BE A PRACTICAL STEP THAT SHOULD BE GIVEN DEFINITE FORM. THE US SIDE IS IN FAVOR OF AN EARLY UNDERSTANDING NOT TO CONDUCT CERTAIN ACTS TOWRD THE SATELLITES OF THE OTHER SIDE. BUT WE WOULD NOT LIKE TO VIEW THIS AS
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EXCLUDING THE BROADER UNDERTAKING. BUCHHEIM POSED ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF FORMULATING A HOSTILE ACTS AGREEMENT. BUCHHEIM REITERATED THAT A COMPREHENSIVE AGREEMENT SHOULD

INCLUDE A PROHIBITION ON ASAT DEVELOPMENT AND DEPLOYMENT, AND THE ELIMINATION OF EXISTING ASAT CAPABILITIES. IT ALSO SHOULD PROVIDE THAT NTM WOULD BE USED FOR VERIFICATION, AND PROHIBIT INTERFERENCE WITH NTM. IT IS ALSO POSSIBLE THAT SOME COOPERATIVE VERIFICATION MEASURES MAY BE REQUIRED; THE US HAS NO IDEA WHAT FORM THEY MIGHT TAKE, SINCE THEY ARE DEPENDENT ON THE PROVISIONS OF THE AGREEMENT.

4. BUCHHEIM DESCRIBED HIS IMPRESSION THAT THE USSR VIEWS THE PROBLEM OF UNLAWFUL SATELLITE ACTIVITY AS BEING CONCERNED WITH THIRD COUNTRIES, AND NOT THE US. HE THEN CHANGED THE SUBJECT AND SAID THAT IF THERE IS AN AGREEMENT TO LIMIT ASAT SYSTEMS, THERE IS STILL THE PROBLEM OF REMAINING CAPABILITY IN OTHER SYSTEMS. AN UNDERTAKING NOT TO CARRY OUT HOSTILE ACTS IS VITAL FOR THIS VERY REASON. SOME DEGREE OF ASAT CAPABILITY WILL RESIDE IN ANY CONTROLLED ROCKET VEHICLE THAT CAN REACH THE VICINITY OF A SPACE OBJECT. THAT LIMITED POTENTIAL WILL RESIDE IN A VARIETY OF SYSTEMS POSSESSED BY BOTH SIDES, INCLUDING THE ABM SYSTEM DEPLOYED BY THE USSR.

5. KHLESTOV ASKED FOR US POSITION ON WORKING OUT HOSTILE ACTS AGREEMENT AT AN EARLY DATE AND CONTINUING WORK ON OTHER ELEMENTS OF US PROPOSAL LATER, RATHER THAN WORKING ON ALL ELEMENTS AT ONE TIME. BUCHHEIM SAID THESE ARE NOT MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE; WE CAN WORK ON THE ELABORATION OF HOSTILE ACTS ELEMENT WITH THE OBJECT OF BRINGING IT TO A QUICK CONCLUSION WITHOUT PREVENTING PROGRESS ON OTHER ELEMENTS. KHLESTOV PRESSED THIS POINT, ASKING IF US AGREES TO SEEK A TREATY ON HOSTILE ACTS, AND LATER
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LOOK TOWARD NEGOTIATIONS TOWARD A TREATY ON THE OTHER ELEMENTS. (KHLESTOV LATER SAID A TREATY WAS NOT THE ONLY POSSIBLE FORM.) THE HOSTILE ACTS AGREEMENT COULD BE INDEPENDENT, AND COULD BE SIGNED AND COME INTO FORCE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. KHLESTOV THEN SAID THAT IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO DRAFT A TREATY NOW; THE QUESTION CONCERNS THE ELABORATION OF SUCH AN AGREEMENT IN THE FUTURE. THE TWO SIDES COULD SIGN THE HOSTILE ACTS AGREEMENT AND HAVE IT COME INTO FORCE, NOT CONDITIONAL ON OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE US POSITION OR ON THE DEGREE OF PROGRESS ON THESE OTHER ELEMENTS.

6. BUCHHEIM REMINDED KHLESTOV THAT THE US SIDE WE HAD RAISED THE SUSPENSION OF TESTING, AND ASKED IF THE SOVIETS COULD PROVIDE HIM WITH THEIR PRELIMINARY IDEAS. KHLESTOV SAID IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO THINK ABOUT EACH OTHER'S QUESTIONS. HE REITERATED THAT THE USSR DOES NOT CONNECT THE PROBLEM OF SPACE OBJECTS USED FOR UNLAWFUL ACTIONS

WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF ASAT CAPABILITIES. HE AGREED THAT, EVEN IF WE CONCLUDE AN AGREEMENT, THERE STILL WOULD BE SECONDARY CAPABILITIES TO COUNTER SPACE OBJECTS WHOSE ACTIVITIES WERE UNLAWFUL. KHLESTOV AGAIN RAISED THE QUESTION OF A SPACE OBJECT INTRUDING INTO NATIONAL AIR SPACE, AND EXPRESSED DOUBT THAT THE US WOULD USE PEACEFUL MEANS TO DEAL WITH SUCH A PROBLEM. BUCHHEIM SAID THAT WE STILL DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE SOVIET CONCERN, AND ASKED FOR A CONCRETE EXAMPLE. KHLESTOV DID NOT PROVIDE ONE. THE MEETING ADJOURNED AFTER TWO HOURS AND FORTY MINUTES.

7. NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED FOR WEDNESDAY, JUNE 14.

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Message Attributes

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